

God's Infinite Grace

IN

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ELECTION

And Impartial Equity in

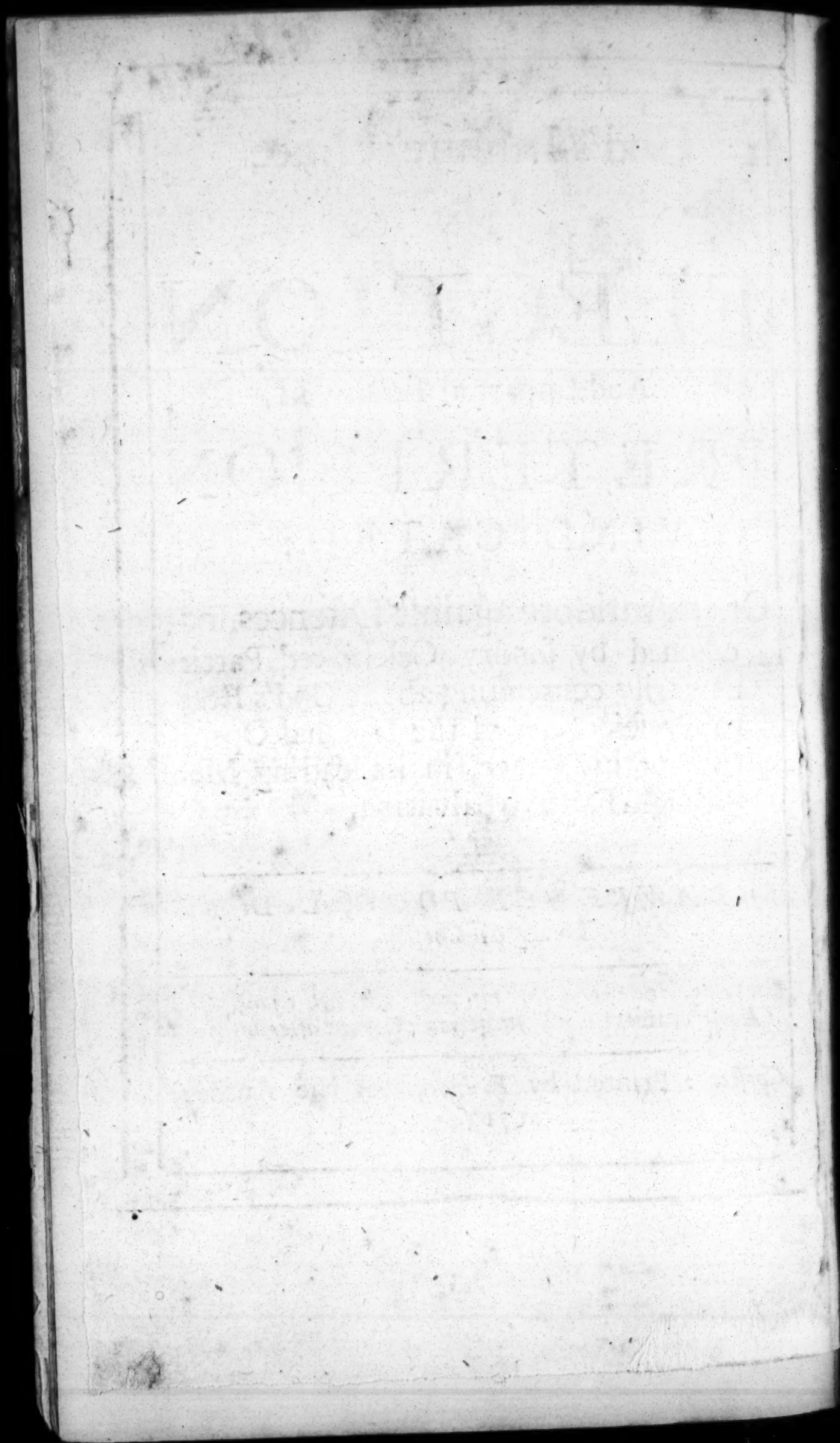
PRETERITION
VINDICATED:

Or an Antidote against Offences, occasioned by sundry Celebrated Parties unwarily contending about God's Eternal Prescience, and the Internal Operations of his Grace, in its leading Men through Faith to Salvation.

By *LAWRENCE FOGG*, D. D. and
Dean of *Chester*.

Ezek. 33. 20. *Tet ye say my ways are not equal, O ye House of Israel I will Judge you every one after his ways.*

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THE
PREFACE
TO THE
READER.

THESE following Pages contain Matters which the Author neither Communicated to Auditories Publickly, nor usually Discoursed of more Privately, unless for the Satisfaction of Doubts and Scruples, and then Cautioning the Persons he Discoursed with against the Absurd, if not Blasphemous Consequences, which too many infer from the Principles of sundry Celebrated Parties contending about them.

But it was necessary for him to Insert some brief Discussion of those Points, in
A 2 his

The P R E F A C E

his Latin Theological Scheme (not long since Published) without which his Representation of Divine Doctrine must have been inexcusably Maimed and Defective.

Much of this Discourse is derived from the 5th Chapter of that Scheme, and with some proper Additions here formed into a distinct and intire Treatise, Adequate to the Subject therein handled, and for the satisfaction of many, who, tho' unacquainted with the Latin Tongue, conscientiously desire Ability to give a reasonable Account of the Faith that is in them, and in special Manner to be Antidoted against such Representations of God as tend to Derogate from the Glory of his Grace, in the Election of some, and of his Equity in Preterition of others of his Creatures made of the same Mould, equally indowed with Faculties of Understanding, Will and Conscience, and Accommodated

to the R E A D E R.

commodated with like Means and Advantages in order to their Salvation.

Wholesome Advice hath indeed sometimes been given to forbear the Publishing such Discourses on these Points, as might occasion the pernicious or perplexing Conceits in unlearned or unstable Christians, he therefore would sooner commit these Papers to the Fire than to the Press, if he were not well assured that they effectually obstructed such wretched Consequences, not only by Nipping the Buds of them, but Tearing up the Roots, and Overthrowing the Principles whence they are inferred, and giving good Evidence that the Hypotheses whence these Consequences proceed, and which we are Advised to forbear to Publish, will vanish upon due Consideration of those here laid down instead of them. For

The P R E F A C E

1. These Pages assert *Divine Prescience* of the most Casual and Contingent Events, which if granted, we cannot with the *Socinians* deny God's certain Knowledge of Men's Arbitrary Determinations from Eternity, nor approve the *Jesuitical* Fiction of a *Scientia Media*, answerable to the variable Choice of the Human Will, and uncertain which way that Choice will incline.

2. They suppose *not an absolute and irrespective* Decree concerning Men's future State, whence some grow Secure, and others Desperate, nor affirm Election to be from foreseen Faith, but that as on the one Hand, there can be no Motive to Election but in God himself, namely, his meer Grace, or the good pleasure of his Will, so on the other Hand, there can be no
Motive

to the R E A D E R.

Motive for Preterition, but in Man himself, namely, his foreseen pertinacious obstructing the Aids which would otherwise bring him through Grace to Salvation.

3. They suppose not such a limited Compassion and Grace, as provided a Redeemer for a *few only*, but a *Messiah* to Seek and Save that which was lost indefinitely, if they would not reject him.

4. They suppose sufficient Aids to be afforded to Mankind, and that the Duty God required since the Fall, how impossible soever to lapsed Nature, was not impossible to such as obstructed not the Aids and Means afforded by his Grace, for the Performance of it.

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The P R E F A C E

5. They assert a *Sufficient*, but not an *Irresistible* Operation of Grace, they assert Grace that may be Opposed, and the Holy Spirit thereby Grieved, Quenched, or Provoked to Strive no longer.

Hence no one can have Umbrage to presume, by *Fancying an Irrespective Decree of Election*, and that it is impossible for him to Perish, fondly concluding himself to be in Christ, nor can any have reason to Despair, or be Discouraged on Account of an inevitable Decree of Reprobation or want of irresistible Grace, since sufficient Grace is ever ready to help, and draw such as will follow its Conduct, tho' it will not always strive with wilful Impenitents, and save Men whether they will or no.

Hence we may discern a good Accord between *Necessity* and *Contingency*,

to the READER.

‘ gency, Certainty of *Event*, and *Liber-*
‘ ty of *Choice*.

‘ How *Nature* stands in need of
‘ *Grace* both to Will and Do, yet of-
‘ ten *Resists Grace*, and renders it In-
‘ effectual.

‘ A Thread Twisted of these In-
‘ gredients, will lead us out of those
‘ Labyrinths, into which the fierce
‘ Contests, and perplexed and end-
‘ less Disputes of *Dominicans* and *Je-*
‘ *suits*, *Molinists* and *Jansenists*, *Re-*
‘ *monstrants*, *Contra Remonstrants*,
‘ *Supra* and *Sublapsarians*, have for a
‘ long time, and some of them for
‘ many Ages bewildred their Disci-
‘ ples, and miserably disquieted the
‘ Church of God, whose Peace is
‘ Aimed at, and may propably be
‘ Promoted and continued among us
‘ in this Nation by the Entertainment
of

The P R E F A C E, &c.

‘ of the Principles here Asserted, they
‘ being more Consonant to the Te-
‘ nor of the Holy Scriptures, the Do-
‘ctrine of our Church, and the com-
‘ mon Reason of Mankind, than the
‘ Scheme which any of the foresaid
‘ contesting Parties have yet offered
‘ to the World.

God's

God's Infinite Grace

I N

ELECTION,

And Impartial Equity

I N

PRETERITION.

I. SECTION.

*The most Remarkable Opinions concerning
God's Eternal Election and Preterition,
may be Reduced to these that follow.*

First, **T**H A T God from Eternity re-
solved to bestow Eternal Life
on all that Obey him, and Condemn the
Disobedient, but neither Predestinated nor
fore-knew who would be Obedient or Dis-
obedient : As if it were Manifestly in the
Will

Will of Men, whether they would enter into the way of Salvation, or being Entered, whether they would proceed in, or return from it; and as if God had not from Eternity fore-seen and Determined what should happen as to the Conversion and Salvation, or Perdition of Particular Persons. This is said to be the Tenet of *Samosatenians* and *Socinians*.

Second, That God fore-knowing and beholding Mankind as not yet Fallen or Created, Elected certain of them to Life Eternal, and the Means leading thereunto, and passed by the rest (being to Perish) at the meer Pleasure of his Will, for the Glory of his Mercy in the Elect, and the Glory of his Justice in the Damnation of those that were Reprobated or Passed by. This is Ascribed to the *Supralapsarians*, who fix the Object of Predestination above or before the Fall, and with the *Sublapsarians* (of whom by and by,) were called *Contra-Remonstrants* from the time of the *Synod of Dort*.

Third, That God viewing Mankind lapsed in *Adam*, and thereby liable to Death and Damnation, resolved of his meer good Will to Redeem some certain particular Persons

and Equity in Preterition. 3

sons from the foresaid State by Christ, and bring them by effectual Means to Life Eternal, and passed by the rest to Perish in the foresaid lapsed State, to the End that he might demonstrate the Glory of his Mercy in Those, and of his Justice in These. This is Attributed to the *Sublapsarians*, who place the Object of Predestination after the Fall; and These with the *Supralapsarians* are also called *Contra-Remonstrants*, from the time of the *Synod* afore said.

Fourth, That God viewing Mankind Fallen in *Adam*, resolved to have Mercy on *all*, and to send his Son who should make Satisfaction for the Guilt of *all*, and offer Grace sufficient to inable them to Believe in him, and obtain Eternal Life, but fore-seeing none could, or few would use well the Grace offered to them, he chose some in Particular, whom he would endow with Efficacious and Irresistible Grace, that by it they should infallibly Believe and be made Partakers of Eternal Salvation, all others being left certainly to Perish, though not without their own Default, namely, Voluntary Infidelity and Impenitence. This Tenet is Ascribed to some Patrons of Irresistible Grace, and they

4 *Grace manifested in Election,*
they agree with the *Contra-Remonstrants*, as
to that Point of *Irresistible Grace*.

Fifth, That God viewing Men Fallen in
Adam, and called to the Means of Salvation
prepared in Christ, Decreed that *Generally*
all that Believed should be Saved, but the
Impenitent and Unbelievers Reprobated,
yet the Predestination of *particular* Persons
should depend upon their *fore-seen Faith* or
Infidelity. This is the Assertion of the *Re-*
monstrants or *Arminians*.

The fore-going Opinions Censured.

First, **T**HE *Socinian* Opinion clasheth
with Divine Prescience, and sup-
poseth Contingencies depending on Man's
Arbitrary Choice cannot be fore-known to
God. Against them there are as many E-
vidences, as Prophetical Predictions, which
have had their certain Accomplishment.

Man indeed being Finite sees only Things
present, but God being Infinite sees all
Things past, present, and to come; for he
was,

was, is, and is to come, and he sees them as they are, whether Necessary or Contingent: As *Omnipotence* is a Power of doing all things that imply not a Contradiction, so *Omniscience* is a Power knowing all that can be known. And *Immensity*, relating to *Time* as well as *Place*, imports a Commensuration to all *Time*, and to so much beyond that, as *Infinite* is beyond *Finite*. To deny this Prescience therefore, would be a Derogating from God the Glory of his Attributes.

Obj. It is no more Derogatory to Omniscience, not to know that which is in Nature unintelligible, than to Omnipotence not to do things impossible.

Ans. The Clause [*in Nature*] importing [*Created Being* or a *Creature*,] the Proposition is false, God is not confined to Nature's Limits.

Inst. That which may be, or may not be, can cast no Idea, or Image of Being on the Mind of God, or hath no Being at all.

Ans. It hath no Being proportion'd to a *Finite* Understanding, to which only it is Future, but God foresees both the Matter and Hanging of it, in the Balance of Humane Indetermination, and also which End
of

6 *Grace manifested in Election,*

of the Balance doth at length Overpoise. He also foresees the other doth not, or never will, tho' he Sees it might. He Sees it is in the Power of a Man's Will, to Sit, or Stand, or Walk, and which he will at any time choose to do, and leave the other undone; and thus it is in Moral Actions also, Christ foresaw whether *Peter* would Deny or Confess him in the High Priests Hall; that *Judas* would voluntarily Betray him, &c.

Object. Hence the Damnation of Sinners would be as Fixed and Unalterable as if it were Actual from Eternity.

Answ. God foresees the End of Reprobates in particular, not as meer Men, but as so and so *qualified*, as *Judas* a *Traytor* and *Impenitent*, who had Power and sufficient Means to have escaped Eternal Death, but voluntarily neglected and opposed Grace and Means sufficient in order to a better Choice, and the Damnation of Impenitents may be justly Fixed.

Object. Such Prescience, &c. tends to deprive God of the Exercise of his Omnipotence, and Represents him to be a helpless Spectator of what Anothers Will is pleased to effect.

Anf. It

and Equity in Preterition. 7

Answ. It derogates not from Omnipotence, that both Parts of a Contradiction are not to be made true by it, namely, that what God saw from Eternity to be done, should not be done, nor inconsistent with Mercy, that just Retribution be given to the wilfully Impenitent.

Obj. God never purposed to Save all Mankind, if any were seen already Damned.

Answ. He purposed not to Save Final Impenitents, but the Saving them which he decreed, was the *Redeeming*, and making *Salvable*; and Christ dyed for them, but not to Save them *irresistibly* in their Impenitence.

Obj. How doth God *seriously* call on such to Repent, whom he foresees will die in their Sins, and bid those take heed they fall not, whom he sees mortally bruised by their Fall?

Answ. When God makes use of this Call, Man is not fallen irreversibly, and this, with other Means (in themselves sufficient) God from Eternity decreed to use, altho' he also foresaw the wilful Neglect and Opposition of Impenitents.

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If

8 *Grace manifested in Election,*

If that which is said suffice not, I refer the Reader to Dr. *Hammond's* Pacifick Letter to Dr. *Sanderfon* on Prescience, for further Satisfaction.

2dly, The *Supralapsarian* Opinion sounds harsh in every Sober Christian's Ears, in that it supposeth God (when he Elected some to Salvation) to have passed by the others, antecedently to, or not moved thereto by Foresight of their Demerit, so that the Fountain of Mens Misery, namely, their Preterition, according to this Hypothesis, would have its first Rise from the Decree of God rather than the Sin of Man.

3dly, The *Sublapsarian* Opinion, though in some Regard more Moderate, as supposing Man to have deserved Reprobation by his Fall, yet the whole Tenor of the Gospel publishing Salvation, by Christ, to all who, notwithstanding the Fall, shall close with the Terms of it, that Publication intimates, that either there was a further Guilt than that of the Fall, which gave occasion to the Preterition of the Non-Elect, or that the Fountain of their Misery had also its first Rise in Preterition, and

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and from the *Sovereign* Will of God. But however the *Sovereignty* of God will justify a Disposal of his Creatures to *Temporal*, Grievous, and Adverse Occurrences (the Evil whereof is otherways recompenced) yet it seems not Consonant to the Notions of Justice and Equity which God hath implanted in us, and to which God frequently appeals in his Word, for the manifesting of the Justice and Equity of his Dealings with Sinful Men; that there should be such seeming Inequality in any of his Dispensations, and the *Eternal* Damnation of the greater Number of them be suspended on his Arbitrary Preterition, if there was no Ground, Motive, or Inducement foreseen in them, to occasion the passing them by, which was not to be met with in the rest.

¶ See the Allusion to the Potters Power over the Clay, Rom. 9. 15. replied unto in following Annotations on that Chapter.

The Fourth Opinion which is erected on the Supposition of *Irresistible* Grace will fall together with its Supporter, namely, that Doctrine of Irresistibility.

10 *Grace manifested in Election,*

Ye do always resist the Holy Ghost (saith St. Stephen, Acts 7. 51.) He was resisted by the Inhabitants of the Old World 120 Years, till he would no longer strive with them; 40 Years he was resisted by the *Israelites* in the Wilderness, till he swore they should not enter into his Rest. Christ stands at the Door and knocks, Rev. 3. 20. he makes not forcible Entry, but inables the Owner to open to him: If they would so do, *Grace sufficient* is offer'd, but impenitent Sinners will not admit it. *You will not come to me that ye might have Life,* saith Christ, John 5. 40. and, *How often would I have gathered you---and ye would not?* Matth. 23. 37.

5^{thly}, The Opinion of the *Remonstrants* seems unwarrantable in *this*, That as even the more moderate *Contra-Remonstrants* assign'd no Reason for Comparative Preterition, namely, why Reprobates are passed by rather than Others, whenas all were equally involv'd in a State of Guilt, on which Hypothesis it follows, that the Eternal Misery of Sinners had its *first Rise* in the Will of God, tho' not Executed before Merited by their own Guilt; so this

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of the *Remonstrants*, accounts Man's Eternal Felicity to have its first Rise from the *foreseen Faith and Perseverance* of Men, since that being excepted, they were all equally Obnoxious.

It being therefore most Consonant to the Tenor of the Holy Scriptures, and the Sober Reason of Christians, that the Good Pleasure of God should be Acknowledged the Source and Fountain of Eternal Happiness in all that are *Saved*, and the Will of Man, the Fountain of Eternal Misery in all that *Perish*: Some other Hypothesis should be thought on, and that which is here sub-joined to certain Propositions, requisite to gain a clear Understanding of that Sublime Point, (rendered more obscure than really it is by sundry over-confident mistaken Notions of it,) will in all Probability be found more Satisfactory.

II. SECTION.

TO Gain such a Notion of Election and Preterition as the Mind of a sober Christian may acquiesce in, it may be expedient to premise something concerning Divine Prescience, God's Concurse to the Actions of his Creatures, the Liberty of Man's Will, and the Determination of it, as in these following Positions, or well warranted Postulata, is contained.

I. *Future Contingencies are foreseen of God.*

I. THE Infinite Extent of Divine Knowledge, even unto Things to come, as well as unto those which are past, and present, is not only discovered to us in the [a] *Scriptures*, but must be owned as a Point of *Natural Theology*. For the Knowledge and Essence of God being

[a]
all my
Built,
far off
in thy
was no
Heart
Naked
to do.

being the same thing, the same Arguments that prove the Perfection and Infinity of the One, will prove the unlimited and immense Extent of the other; insomuch, that even Contingencies which depend upon Man's Free and Arbitrary Choice, are also foreknown to him, as must be Granted from his frequent [a] Predictions of such Contingencies, which have had their certain Accomplishment. *Tot testes quot Prophetae*, as *Tertul.* intimates, hereof there are as many Witnesses as there have been Prophets. It is not necessary for us to inquire, *whence* the Certainty of this Prescience hath its Original. Fit it is, that the most Inquisitive should say with *David*, Ps. 139. 6. *Such knowledge is too wonderful for me, it is high, I cannot attain unto it*, especially considering how many Operations there are in Nature, and

[a] Isa. 44. 28. *That saith of Cyrus, he shall perform all my pleasure, even saying to Jerusalem thou shalt be Built, &c.* Ps. 139. 2. *Thou understandest my thoughts afar off, ver. 16. Thine Eyes did see my substance --- and in thy Book were my Members written, when as yet there was none of them.* 1 John 3. 20. *God is greater than our Heart and knoweth all things.* Heb. 4. 13. *All things are Naked and Opened to the Eyes of him, with whom we have to do.*

14 *Grace Manifested in Election,*
even in our Selves, whose Existence is
manifest, yet we cannot Dive into the
Manner *how* they are effected, but more
safe it is to resolve this matter into the In-
finite Perfection of his Knowledge, than
into his absolute Decrees; for the *Sins* of
Men being among such Contingencies,
it will sound very harshly to say, his Sa-
cred Decrees are the Fountain whence the
Sins of his Creatures derive the Certain-
ty of their Futurition. See p. 8.

II. *Things Possible are foreseen,*
in order of Nature, *before*
things Future were De-
creed.

THIS Prescience, or Fore-sight of
God, is either, 1. That which (to
speak after the manner that we can frame
Notions of it,) is Antecedent to his De-
cree, and ordinarily called, *Scientia sim-*
plis intelligentia. [A Knowledge of mere
Speculation.] or, 2. That which follows
upon the Decree, when having resolved
what

what shall come to pass, he foresees the things that he hath so resolved on, as Future, whereas the other not being Decreed, were Possible only; for though he had never determined any thing to a certain Futurity, yet it must be supposed that his Knowledge was as Extensive as his Power, and that he foresaw what he could do, and how he might Order and Govern other things, and in other Ways and Methods, than those that shall at any time actually exist.

III. *Divine Concurse inables the Agent to Act suitably to its Nature, but not by way of Premotion or Predetermination.*

NOT to call in Question the received Opinion of the first Causes concurse to every Action of the second, and whether that be any thing more than an upholding Creatures, and their several Faculties

16 *Grace Manifested in Election,*
Faculties in their Being and Active Vigour,
(according to *Durandus* and *Ludovicus de*
Dola,) it is on all hands granted, that there
is an influence of the First Cause into e-
very Action of the Second, as those Texts
[a] of S. Scripture, commonly alledged
will sufficiently Evince. Nevertheless
that Influence is not a Predetermination,
or particular Direction of the Agent, Alien
from, and Cross to that which the Princi-
ples of its Nature would incline it unto,
but that general and indifferent Concurse
or Causality of Divine Providence, which,
as the influence of a First Cause, must be
supposed to inable the Creature to exert
its Natural Propensities.

[a] Ps. 104. 13. 14. *He causeth the Grass to Grow
for the Cattle, and Herb for the Service of Men,* and 135.
7. *He causeth the Vapours to Ascend from the Ends of the
Earth.* Math. 6. 30. *He Cloatheth the Grass of the Field.*
1 Cor. 15. 38. *God giveth to the Grain a Body---and to
every Seed its own Body.*

But here least any should impute the
Creatures Miscariages and Failings in their
Operations unto God, that Position of the
founder Schoolmen is to be well confi-
dered, "*Causa Prima determinatur a Se-*
cunda,

“ cunda, quoad Speciem actus, non contra.

“ The First Cause is determined by the

“ Second, as to the kind or sort of the

“ Action, not the Second by the First.

An Action is of this or that sort or kind, not because of, or from the Concurse of the First Cause, for that is General and Indifferent, and (as some express it) is determin'd by the Second, which Second Cause or Creature, is often by its own Nature determined to produce an effect of one certain Kind : Thus Fire, (God Co-operating) produceth Heat, not Cold, not because God determines the Fire to that Species of Action, but his General Influence is determined by the Natural Propensity, or because God Accommodates his Influence to the Nature of the Fire, for producing of Heat.

Thus also in the Production of a Monster, God affords his Concurse, but so Accommodates it to the Agent, that it is, by reason of Defect in the Agent, that a Monster, rather than a perfect Effect, is produced.

IV. Liberty

IV. *Liberty is as Natural to a Rational Agent, as any sort of Motion or Propensity is to an Inanimate.*

AS the Sovereign Creator gave to some *Natural Agents*, a Propensity to Move directly upwards or downwards, to Others to Move *Circularly*, and to Each a Constancy of that Inclination, with Principles inabling them for their other Operations also, (when they are not by some extrinsical Force, violently impeded) so he gave to Reasonable Creatures *Liberty of Choice*, which in Matters within their Sphere, they can make Use of, and thereby Act Arbitrarily, their Principles Impowering them to Choose, or Refuse, to Prefer, Dislike, or Suspend, as the Will shall upon Deliberation resolve, as well as the foresaid Propensities and Principles, Impower the Inferior Creatures, for their proper Motions and Efficiencies. And as

a Premotion from the first Cause, was not necessary to the Operations of Natural Agents, so neither is it necessary to the Operations of the Will, in voluntary Agents. Nor can the Assertors of Premotion maintain their Consequences, (justly abhorred by every sober Christian,) although a General and Indifferent Influence of the First Cause is warrantably asserted, as in Operations of Natural, so in those of Voluntary Agents, to which the General is Sufficient; for it is as much within the Power of the Will, by the Aid of God's common and indifferent Concourse, without the Assistance of Supernatural Grace, to Choose or Refuse in Matters of Inferior, or meerly Moral Order, as it is in the Nature of a Stone to Descend, of Fire to Burn, or any of the Celestial Bodies to persist in their usual and Natural Motion, the General and Indifferent Concourse is sufficient for the Motions of each of them.

V. *The Wills Choice, is from it Self, and its own Elicit Act, altho' Divine Concurse be necessary to its Choice.*

AS in God's Co-operating with Natural Agents, his Concurse is so Accommodated to the Agent, that it is by reason of the Agent's Deficiency, that there is any Aberration in its Acting; Thus in Gods Co-operating with the Will in Moral Actions, he so far Concurs as not to be wanting to his Creature, or deny that Concurse even in Sinful Actions, which is necessary to its State in Acting, but that being only a *General* or *Indifferent* Concurse, it is such as do's not determine the Will, but is *determined by it*, and when the Will inclines to that which is Evil, rather than Good, it is not because of God's Concurse determining, or ordinarily Byassing its Choice, but from its own Freedom in Choosing; for God only vouchsafed, (or With-held not,) the *General* Influence which
became

became him as First Cause, that he might not be wanting to the Condition of his Creature, since without that it could not Act or Exert its Choice, much less Prosecute and Accomplish it.

VI. *The Will may in some Sense be said to determine the Divine Concurse, necessary to its Choice.*

IN the Third Position was shewed, that the Concurse of the first Cause unto Natural Agents determines not, but is determined to this or that *Species or sort of* Action by the Second. This is also applicable to *voluntary* Agents, yet to prevent Objections, it may be expedient to explain it with this Distinction.

The *Determination of the Will*, when taken for its *closing with, or rejecting* of the Object, is an *Action*, and therefore proceeds both from the First and Second Cause, and in some respects Primarily (in order of Nature) from God, who doth not depend on

22 *Grace Manifested in Election,*
on any other in Acting, and secondarily
from the Creature, which depends in Act-
ing on the former. But when by the *Wills*
determination, we understand its willing
or moving the *first Cause* to *Accommodate its*
Concourse to the Second, it is not any *Action*
that is meant by it, but an *Objective Reason*
or *Condition* of the Will, which exhibits oc-
casion to God, (who weighs the Propensi-
on and Genius of our Minds,) to concur
to a Choice of one kind, rather than ano-
ther, as also the Natural Propension in
Fire exhibits occasion to the first Cause,
to Accommodate his Influence to produce
an Effect suitable to that Propension, ra-
ther than an Effect of another kind.

VII. *Man's Will since the Fall, retains*
Liberty or Power in Mortals, and
Externals of Religion, and may (at
least) forbear to reject Aids of Grace
exhibited to it.

ALthough the Faculties wherewith
Man was first indowed, (and parti-
cularly his Free Will,) were much Impair-
ed

ed by his Fall; so that he cannot, without Super-natural Grace, convert himself, yet his Freedom of Will being Weakened only, and not utterly lost, he may still, by the Aid of God's General and Indifferent Concurse, avoid many Obstructions of Grace and Salvation, (as fundry Instances of a sensual Life, regardlessness of his Spiritual Concernments, &c.) he may attend on Means of Grace, Hear the Word, Confer and Meditate on it, Pray, &c. He may ponder the Equity of Divine Precepts, the Dreadfulness of Threats, the Allurements of Promises, the Amiability of the Ways of God, the hideous Consequences of a sinful Course, &c. He may reflect on his Heart and Life, enter upon a Scrutiny and Search, whether the Characters of a Wretched and Damnable State appear in him or no, Apprehend a Possibility of Salvation, and a Certainty of it, upon his Performance of the Conditions required in the Gospel, and moreover may use Means for removing those Vicious Habits which are prone to withhold him from a thorough and saving Improvement of the foresaid Methods of Salvation. At least it remains in the Pow-

24 *Grace Manifested in Election,*
er of his Will, by Nature to forbear wil-
fully Verging towards an ill Choice in mat-
ters within its Reach, which though of a
Moral Nature only, yet may Provoke God
to with-hold the further Super-Natural
Aids and Succours, which otherwise he
is ready to Exhibit, in order to a Succes-
ful Use of the Means of Salvation afford-
ed by him, or Man may forbear that Op-
position unto, or Averseness from Closing
with the Means of Salvation afforded,
which renders them Unsuccessful, or pro-
vokes God to with-hold his Blessing on
them, in order to a happy Issue.

VIII. *The Will may forbear
to make an Ill Choice, when
Grace Capacitates it to make
a Better.*

MANY Eager Contests there are
about the Abilities of Fallen Man
to Believe, and make due Use and Im-
provement of the Means which God hath
Provided for his Recovery, but that he
may

may forbear that Wickedness, the foresight whereof may be a sufficient Occasion of his Preterition, needs not to be Questioned; for that Man may not wilfully incline to make an Ill Choice, when his Circumstances *inable* him to make a *Better*, is Self-Evident, and when we speak of a Man's *wilful* Inclination to make an Ill Choice, or of wilful Neglects in matters within the remaining Powers of Nature, we suppose the *Means* provided for his Recovery, and the *Aids* which God affords to be *Sufficient*, and to Counterpoise all contracted Impotency, and Disadvantage from *Evil Habits*, so that no Defaults fore-seen give occasion to Preterition, but those which are *wilful* and persisted in, or which some way renders the Helps and Assistances, which God would be ready to supply the Sinner withal useless, and of no Effect, in order to the proper End and Scope of them.

IX. *We are not necessarily to suppose any Priority or Posteriority of Decrees.*

IT is on all hands Granted, that the Divine Decrees are Eternal, and therefore

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fore, properly speaking, there is no Priority or Posteriority of them, yet ordinarily Men of different Persuasions in these sublime Points, alledging that we cannot conceive or speak of the things of God, but in a way suitable to our Finite Condition and Understanding, frame several Schemes or Tables of the Number and Order of them, making such Numbers, and such Orders of them, as agrees best with their different Sentiments, or rather their different Sentiments and Doctrines are Erected upon their Fancies, of the Priority or Posteriority of them.

But forasmuch as all things that are suppos'd to be in God are equally Eternal, it is fit that we suppose no Priority or Posteriority, when the Supposition helps not but hinders our more agreeable Apprehensions of the Aids of God, and therefore though for such a Help, we may suppose in God a Knowledge of all things Possible stiled *Scientia simplicis intelligentia*, [Knowledge of meer Speculation,] Antecedent in order of Nature to his *Willing* of things Future, yet we need not to suppose a *Decreeing*, first of this, then of that, but only

only that, upon a fore-sight of such a possible Series of things, as was agreeable to his Infinite Wisdom, he did *Simul & Semel* at once for all, in the same Moment of Eternity, resolve all things should come to pass in that Model that he saw Consonant to the Ends and Purposes of his Infinite Wisdom, in framing of the World.

III. SECTION.

Sundry Scruples, which commonly Obstruct or Perplex the Notions of Predestination, being prevented by the Premises, this following Scheme will seem least Obnoxious to Exception, and not be attended with those inextricable Difficulties, which the other Modern Schemes can neither Decline, nor Resolve, or Rationally account for.

1. We cannot but suppose, that the Infinitely Wise, and All-knowing God, having in his Mind from all Eternity, and (in Order of Nature,) Antecedent to his Decree,

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cree, innumerable Models, and Ideas of Worlds, and being able by his Almighty Power, to produce a World, conformable to any of them, (if he should so Resolve,) had an Idea of *this* also which now Exists.

2. We may suppose also, God fore-saw, that if he should Create a World, answerable to the Idea he should pitch upon, with all its Store and Furniture, and therein place Man, a reasonable Creature, indowed with Liberty of Will, to Choose Good or Evil, and give him a Law for Direction of his Moral Behaviour; we may suppose, I say, God foresaw that, when left to his Liberty, he would wilfully incline to Choose the Evil, rather than the Good, unless God should over-power that Liberty, which he had indowed him withal, or with-held that *General* and *Indifferent* Concourse of a First Cause, without which a Second Cause cannot Act at all. Thus he fore-saw our First Parents Ill Choice and Fall, if he should resolve to Create and Indow them with Liberty as aforesaid, and not be wanting to his Creatures, by Denying Freedom of Choice, or Ability to Prosecute it.

3. We

3. We may also suppose the Infinitely Wise God fore-saw, that if, of his Goodness and Compassion, he should send his Son, to become a Saviour, and should provide other subordinate Means, in order to Salvation, (sundry whereof Man might by the remaining Power of Nature, freely close with, and profitably Improve,) and also, if *sufficient* Grace should be ready to assist, where Nature was too Weak, we may, (I say,) suppose God foresaw who would in this Case wilfully Neglect such of those Means, as they might, either by the remaining Power of Nature alone, or by them together, with the Aids and Succours, which he would be ever ready on his Part, to exhibit close with, and make good Use of, and by that Neglect, or Opposition of the said Means, frustrate the Influence which those Means might have towards their Salvation.

4. We may further suppose, that this wilful Neglect, Mis-improvement and Frustration of such Means as Men were, (whether by the remaining Power of Nature, or Supervenient Grace,) sufficiently Capacitated to close with, might be an Ob-

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jective Reason, why the Authors should be passed by, when God in his Infinite Grace and Mercy Decrees the Salvation of others.

5. Upon God's fore-sight hereof, and that he could Order all the Ingredients and Occurrences of this Model, to most Wise, Good, and Gracious Purposes,

1. We may reasonably think he did not *First* Decree to glorifie his own Attributes, by the Eternal Weal of some, and *Woe* of others of his Creatures : Or, *Secondly*, To permit the Fall, and then, passing by some, out of his meer and absolute Will and Pleasure, without Foresight of some peculiar Motive, and not to be met with in others, decreed to send his Son for the Ransom of a certain Number, whom he would *irresistibly* cause to Repent and Believe, in order to their Interest in him ; or, *3dly*, foreseeing *Faith* in some who would Believe, did *therefore Elect* them, and pass by others, but at once in the same Moment of Eternity resolved on the aforesaid Model, that each Particular of it should come to pass in its proper Season.

Hereby the *Decree of Redemption* appears to be meerly from *Divine Grace*, which
resolved

resolved to make sufficient Provision, and Administer sufficient Aid, in order to the Salvation of lost Man, which Decree of Redemption became Personal to every one whom he foresaw would not utterly Reject that Provision and Aid : And *Preterition* appears to be only from foreseen *wilful Impenitence* and utter Rejecting, and Excluding the Methods of Grace, and Provisions to be made for Lapsed Man's Recovery, and this without Priority or Posteriority of Decrees.

Nevertheless it is not denied, but that God of his Infinite Bounty and Super-abundant Grace, may sometimes, in the course of his Providence, vouchsafe, not only his General and Indifferent Concurse and *sufficient* Grace, but a *special* and more *effectual* Grace to some, who (at that time at least) were of themselves, as wilfully inclined to neglect the Means and Opportunities which they had Power to make better use of, in order to Salvation, as well as others ; and therefore we may suppose, he did not pass them by with others, whom he foresaw would wilfully refuse their own Mercy, but Elect them to Salvation ;
whereof

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whereof St. Paul is, by many, thought a
probable Instance, but if ever there was,
or shall be such an Instance, it is to be Ac-
counted a Special, Rare, and not to be again
expected Monument of Divine Grace and
Mercy.

We need not to suppose Man, Fallen
from the good State wherein he was Crea-
ted, to have Power to Repent and Believe, so
that God upon the Foresight thereof, should
found his Decree of *Election*; for since sun-
dry Passages of Scripture, and Arguments
unanswerable, ascribe Election meerly to
the Grace of God, therefore in this Hy-
pothesis, we do not found it on Faith fore-
seen, good Use to be made of Natural
Abilities, so far as they will reach, (tho'
the bad Use of those Abilities, might be
occasion of Preterition.) But whereas, in
other Opinions, Men contend, whether
there be Reasons for *Election*, in the Per-
sons Elected; this supposeth Lapsed Men
retaining full Power, through the General
and Indifferent Concourse of God's com-
mon Providence, to make a bad Choice,
to refuse or reject the Offers, and neglect
the Outward Means of Grace, which
would

would be Provided in Order to their Recovery; and by this their Fore-seen wilful Neglect, and Refusal of that which was within their Power, to have *given occasion*, that God should leave them in their Lapsed Condition, when of his Mercy, he would Elect the rest.

IV. SECTION.

TILL the foresaid Scheme be thoroughly Examined, and deliberately Pondered by us, it cannot be expected, but that sundry Scruples will be Rising in our Thoughts against it, especially if the premised Paragraphs have not been well considered, particularly such as these.

Obj. According to this Hypothesis, the Will of God is supposed to Depend upon, and would be Determined by the Creature, as to the Manner and Kind of the Concurse, which he is to afford. His Decrees would be suspended upon these Inclinations, and that he should Predestinate Men

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Men to Grace and Glory, according as they would dispose themselves to close with, and make good Use of the Means Provided, in order to Salvation, and those to Wrath and Hell, who would dispose themselves to Reject those Means; and thus the Creature, or Second Cause would not depend on the First, but the First upon the Second.

Answ. God is not Moved, or his Will determined by the Creature *Effectively*, but may be *Objectively*, that is, there may be a *Ratio Objectiva*, some Condition or Consideration, in the Object that may occasion an Influence or Concurse of the First Cause, to an Action of one Kind, rather than another. As the Natural Condition or State of Fire occasions God to Accommodate his Influence to produce Heat, rather than Coldness, and the Defect in the Man or Woman, occasions the Divine Concurse to apply to the Production of a Monster, rather than a perfect Man, so we may conceive, that God fore-seeing the Will in its Liberty, (if Divine Concurse were not withheld,) about to make an ill Choice, would not be wanting to his Creature,

Creature, being a free Agent, by denying that General Concurse, without which it could not make, and pursue its Choice, yet it cannot hence be thought to depend upon, or be Necessitated by his Creature, for he *freely* made his Creature a *Necessary* or *Voluntary* Agent. He freely Decreed to afford his Concurse to the Natural Propensity of the One, and the free Choice of the Other; he can, if he pleases, Deny his Concurse, he freely resolves not to be Wanting to his Creatures, but so to Accommodate himself to them, that they should not want any Aid requisite to their Acting thus or otherwise, as their Prepenſion or *Choice* exhibits occasion for his supplying them with it.

Obj. This Scheme supposeth (as is often Objected against the *Remonstrants*,) those whose Natures are equally Corrupted, to be unequally Affected towards Good and Evil, and some who are *Dead* in Sin, to be of themselves inclinable to give the Preference to that which is Spiritually Good, when offered to their Choice.

Answ. 1. First, when Fallen Man is said to be *Dead* in Sin, it is a Metaphorical Expression,

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tion, and not to be extended beyond its
due Bounds.

2. God foresaw the Power of Man's
Will in his Lapsed State to be Weakened,
not utterly Annihilated, and when, as all
would be equally *unable* for any *Spiritual*
Good, without further Grace and Aids that
would be Effectual, if duly Accepted and
Improved, we may suppose God foresaw,
that upon his providing and exhibiting
such *sufficient Grace and Aids* as aforesaid,
some by the remainders of their Liberty,
(more Powerful to make an ill than good
Choice,) would be inclinable to *Reject*
those *sufficient Aids and Helps*, and even
Contemn or Neglect such *External Means*
of Salvation, which their Natural Powers,
though Weakened, sufficiently Capaci-
tated them to close with, and make use of,
if God should Decree to afford them, and
not with-hold his General Concurse. And
this seems to import, that fore-seen Inclina-
bleness to a *wilful Rejecting* Grace suffici-
ently exhibited, is a Condition or Consid-
eration in the Creature, why God *justly passed*
them by, when he fore-saw also that Grace,
which

which he would provide would Powerfully Recover, Sanctify and Save the rest.

Obj. If any such Condition in the Object be supposed, then Predestination to Grace and Glory, Conversion, Justification, Sanctification, and whatever Steps there are to Salvation, are not from the Absolute Will of God, and of his meer Grace and Favour.

Ans. 1. Each of those Steps to Salvation, are of God's meer good Will and Grace, as the *Effective Cause*, and no Qualification or Condition in the Object contributes to the Meriting any of them. 2. Each of them is of God's meer *Grace and Favour*. Man's Salvation had its first Rise from thence only. It was from his ever to be Adored *Philanthropy*, that he took pity on Man in his fore-seen Lapsed State, and Entertained Thoughts of preparing Means for his Recovery.

It was of *Grace* (though common,) that he would so far repress depraved Nature, that all who otherwise could not but be inclinable to Reject the Means of Salvation, (had Power) not to Reject them. It was of *Grace*, that God Elected to Salvation,

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tion, all and every one, in whom he fore-
saw not the foresaid Objective Reason of
Preterition. Without *Preventing* Grace,
the Elect could not Will those things, for
the not Rejecting whereof, their own Na-
tural Power, together with God's Gene-
ral Concourse sufficed, (as in the Scheme
of Predestination is suggested,) it is much
rather from Grace *Co-operating*, that any
good Work is perfected by them. And
Lastly, to Grace alone, the Conversion of
Sinners, and the other Steps to Salvation
are to be Ascribed, for the Decreeing and
Conferring whereof, no Desert was to be
found in the Creature; only there was *not*
that *Objective Reason of Preterition*, as
was fore-seen in them that Perish.

Obj. Those who Contend for Election,
having been from fore-seen *Faith*, do not
all suppose it to be from any *Merit* of Faith,
but it seems to some to have been an Ob-
jective Reason or Consideration, on which
God Elected Some rather than Others,
and the fore-seen Disposition in Some, to
comply with the Aids and Grace of God's
Holy Spirit, in performing the Condition
of the Covenant, *implies* that *Faith*, which
they

contend to be the Objective Reason

W Fallen Man was fore-seen
the Condemnation and Curse
of Covenant of Works, there-
Faith, and every thing that is
merely the Infinite and Unac-
compassion, Grace, and Mercy
moved him to design a Re-
him, and entering into a bet-
of Life, upon most Gracious
promise the sufficient Aids and
ces of his Spirit, for producing
obedience, and the like Conditions
Hence it is apparent that Faith
be an Objective Reason, or An-
of Electing Grace, but an Effect

it is not denied, but Faith and other
Dispositions may be considered in E-
lection, as Means or Conditions on which
the Blessings of the Covenant are Promised,
yet we must in all reason deny, that the
fore-sight of them induced God to enter
into Covenant with any Persons, or *Elect*
them on account of those Conditions. On
the contrary, Faith is a Consequent of E-
lection,

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lection, Acts 13. 48. *As many as were*
ordained to Eternal Life Believed
by [Ordained,] we Understand
or [Ordered, Disposed, and saved]
of Eternal Life.]

2. Altho' Faith, Repentance
Conditions and Means necessary
to the Benefits of the Covenant
to Eternal Life, yet such Qualities
are not wrought by the meer
Nature, *without the Aids of Pre-*
Subsequent Grace, nor are necessa-
ry conditions thereof, nor Possible to be in-
duced; each of them is to be Ascribed
to Divine Grace, the want of them to
the Will of Man, Striving against, and
hindering the Operation of it.

The Sum of the whole Matter is,
God fore-seeing Man's Apostacy, and
Commiseration of his forlorn Condition,
resolving to Provide a Redeemer, and
sufficient Means for his Recovery, we may
Reasonably suppose that God resolved on
such Measures as were not unsuitable to
the Nature of Creatures indowed with
Understanding, Will and Conscience, and
therefore not to save them Irresistibly,
whether

and Equity in Preterition. 41

whether they would or no, but in way of Faith and Repentance, which are proper Exercises of those Faculties; and because the said Duties exceeded the Maimed and Degenerate Powers of Nature, able, if they Peremptorily will, to Resist, Prove, and Quench the Influences of God's Holy Spirit, yet insufficient for their Duty, we may, (I say) reasonably suppose that God would justly resolve to pass by, or Reprobate those whom he foresaw would Obstinately Resist, and Frustrate the Aids and Grace, sufficient to have led them through Faith to Salvation, if they had not wilfully Rejected them; but that those Gracious Aids would prevail with, and obtain their Effect upon certain others, whom he so Elected to be Heirs of Everlasting Salvation. Holiness therefore and Happiness, are justly to be Ascribed to God's good Pleasure and Grace, but Man himself is Author of his own Sin and Misery.

This Matter may be Illustrated by the Parable of the Traveller, who falling into the Hands of Thieves, was Stripped, Wounded, and left half Dead, but being

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Commiserated by a good *Samaritan*, had his Wounds bound up, Wine and Oyl Poured into them, was brought into an Inn, and Care taken, that no Means should be wanting, requisite for his Recovery. It cannot with any Reason be thought, that the Traveller's Recovery was owing to himself, in that he suffered the Wine and Oyl to be Poured into his Wounds, and Rejected not the other Medicinal Means that were Provided and Administered to him; much less is it a *Fore-sight*, that he would so Demean himself, be reasonably thought the cause why the *Samaritan* was so Charitable to him, rather than the *Samaritan's* Goodness, Favour, and Benignity: And if the *Samaritan* had certainly fore-known, that the Traveller would not Admit the Means provided for his Recovery, (which he easily might, and it highly Concerned him to Comply with,) that he would Reject his Cordials, Tear off his Plaisters, whether his Tenders would or not, so that all the Benefactor and Fosterer's Succours, (in themselves abundantly sufficient,) would be rendered Vain and Unsuccessful, he might surely have forborn his

his Care and Cost, and the Traveller's Perishing, should be justly imputed to the Traveller's own Wilfulness and Perverseness, not to the Samaritan's Preterition.

Augmentation of this Assertion, with the Definition of Predestination, in the 17th Article of the Doctrine of the Church of England.

IN the 17th Article of the Church of England, we are Taught that Predestination to Life, is the Eternal Purpose of God, whereby he hath firmly Decreed by his Secret Counsel, to deliver those from Curse and Damnation, whom he hath chosen in Christ, and to bring them through Christ to Salvation, whence, in due Season, by the Spirits working in them, they through Grace obey the Call, are Justified freely, Walk Religiously, and at length by God's Mercy obtain Everlasting Felicity.

1. It is Evident that altho' the Hypothetical Prescience, which, we have said, must be understood in this Doctrine of

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Predestination, is not Mentioned in express Words in this Article, yet it necessarily be supposed, because the Article affirms God to have firmly Decreed from Eternity, to deliver those whom he had Chosen in Christ, and by certain Means bring them to Salvation; for it is necessary, that he should Fore-see those to be Created, and in the Rank of Creatures indowed with Freedom of Choice, to be ready to Abuse their Freedom, yea, to be Lapsed, that he should, I say, foresee them, at least Hypothetically, and Antecedently, (according to our Capacity of Understanding in Matters of this Nature,) before he Decreed any thing concerning their Deliverance. Therefore we have only uttered, that something more Explicitly, which is *Necessarily* supposed and Concisely suggested in the Article, but nothing contrary to, or Unwarrantably differing from it, is asserted by us in this Matter.

2. We have shewed, that God was willing to Provide proper Means for his Peoples Redemption, to send Christ the Redeemer, and for his Sake to Deliver them, and

and the Article Teacheth the same thing.
Those whom he hath Chosen in Christ, &c.

3. We have said moreover, that God will afford *sufficient Grace*, in order to Conversion and Sanctification, neither is there here any Disagreement, for so Runs the Article he Decreed, that by *his Spirit working in them, they Obey the Divine Call, walk Religiously, &c.*

4. Tho' there are some, who considering the Words of the Article, *seperately* and differently from the other Declarations and Tenets of the Church, conceive the Grace of Predestination to be restrained to some certain Persons only, because it is here said, God Decreed to Deliver or Redeem *those* whom he *Chose in Christ*, and bring them to Salvation, as if he would not have others to be Saved also; yet it is well known, the said Church has constantly Taught, that God hath provided, designed and exhibited a sufficient Remedy and Means, in order to Redemption, not of some only, but of all, and in the Administration of the Lord's Supper, commands the Elements to be given to each Communicant, with this Form of Words; The

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Body of our Lord Jesus Christ, which was
given for thee, &c. and the Blood Shed for
thee, &c.

And in Article 31, The Offering of
Christ once made, is that perfect Redem-
ption, Propitiation and Satisfaction, for
all the Sins of the *whole World*, &c. the
like also in Article 2.

5. When the 17th Article saith Prede-
stination is the Everlasting Purpose of God
Decreed by his Counsel Secret to us, it
seems spoken of the Reason or Moving
Cause of Predestination, which is Secret
and not Known to us, and besides his In-
finite Mercy, (the Account whereof is on-
ly within himself,) none appears to us
whether we consider his Commiserating
all Mankind, or any who are supposed to
be Elected, rather than others; for in the
Lapsed, no Good could be fore-seen, much
less *Faith*, for that being an *Effect* of Grace
could in no wise *Move* God to bestow
Grace.

But as concerning *Reprobation*, Obsti-
nate and Persevering Opposition to suffi-
cient Grace, fore-seen, might be a Rea-
son why he should pass by some, altho
neither

neither Faith, nor any thing in the Creature could be a Motive to *Election*, but in the Interim, that the Election of no One ought to be Ascribed to that Non-Repugnancy, may plainly appear from the Parable of the *Samaritan*, as the Matter has already been thence Illustrated.

Annotations on some Verses of the 9th Chap. to the Romans.

THE Apostle in *Rom. 9.* speaks directly of the Rejection of the *Jews*, from the Priviledges of the People of God, and Reception of the *Gentiles*, as is plain from the Beginning and Conclusion of the Chapter.

The *Jews* were ready to Murmur, and object against the Possibility of their Rejection. If we be cast off, the Promise made to the Posterity of *Abraham*, and *Israel* would be void and of no Effect. But he Answers, that all Descending from *Abraham*, after the Flesh, were not to be accounted the Seed, to which the Promise was made, *Verse 6. &c.* For when God said, *in Isaac shall thy Seed be called; Is-*
mael

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mael being Rejected, he signified that he reserved to himself a Right of excluding whom he pleased, and accounting those for the Seed, who carefully followed the Steps of *Abraham*, v. 7. The Promise, namely, *Sarah shall have a Son*, was made after *Ismael* was Born, therefore, not to all the Seed of *Abraham* after the *Flesh*, but to the Seed by special Grace, not according to the course of *Nature*, but by *Sarah*, now Old, and *Naturally Barren*, or past Bearing.

Obj. When the Children were yet Unborn, and had done neither Good nor Evil, it seems scarce Equitable to be said, v. 11. *The Elder shall serve the Younger*, and it is written, *Esau have I hated*.

1. *Ans.* He saith not that God had not yet *Fore-seen* what Evil would be done, after they should be Born, and placed in such and such Circumstances, and left to their Liberty and Choice.

2. The Prophecy has not Reference to the Persons of *Jacob* and *Esau*, but to their Posterity, for *Esau* himself never served *Jacob*; on the contrary, *Jacob* owned him as his Lord, but the Posterity of *Esau*, the *Edomites*, became Obnoxious to the Hatred both

the Israelites and of God, *Obad. 10.*
Moreover we read not those Words,
[*Esau have I Hated,*] before the time of
Malachi, Chap. 1. 2. after that the *Edo-*
mites had done Remarkable Evil Things a-
gainst God, and the People of *Israel*, whence
the Prophet *Obad.* denounceth more than
ordinary Threatnings against them.

3. Others also observe, that that Phrase
of *Hating* is not always used absolutely,
but sometimes only Comparatively: Thus
we read that God saw *Leah* was *Hated* by
ob. Father and Mother were to be Hated
in some Cases, *Luke 14. 26. And Life it*
self, John 12. 25. Which hath its Truth,
but the Expression, *Mal. 1. 2, 3. Deno-*
teth the Edomites were to be properly Punish-
ed, and therefore absolutely Hated.

Rom. 9. v. 14. Is there then Unright-
eousness with God, namely, that he Re-
jecting the Posterity of *Abraham*, who
followed the Righteousness which is of the
Law given by himself, should Receive the
Gentiles, who received not the Law, but
the Gospel, to be his People? God forbid,
saith he; for he saith to *Moses*, I will have
Mercy on whom I will have Mercy, that
is,

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is, altho' he had Adopted the People of *Abraham* to be his People, he wanted Liberty to extend that Grace to others, so long as they Refuse not to Receive the Gospel Preach'd by his Command to them.

Rom. 9. v. 16. It is not then of him that Willeth, nor of him that Runneth, but of God that sheweth Mercy,] Let not any infer from hence, that *our Willing* and *Endeavouring* is vain, and to *no purpose*, *Rev. 22. 17. Whoever Will, may take of the Water of Life freely, and so Run, that he may obtain,* *1 Cor. 9. 24. And ye did Run well* *Gal. 5. 7.* But God bestows not his Benefits on all, if they Run out of the *Way* he Prescribes, as the *Jews*, who Hearkened not to the Voice of the Gospel.

Verse 17. For this same purpose have I *raised thee up*, that I might shew *my Power* in thee, (*saith God to Pharaoh.*)

Far be it from us to Understand it, as if God had *Created*, and *Hardened Pharaoh*, to the End that he might have cause to Punish him. The Apostle useth the Word *Exegeira* which may be Translated. I have made thee *stand*, or I have made, that thou *mayst subsist*, or I have *Preserved* thee, or the

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e. I have *spared thee and prolonged* that the Equity of my Justice, *in action*, might be Manifest to *that thou mayst be an Example* to Earth.

He hath Mercy therefore on *whom he will have Mercy, and whom he will Hardeneth.*

Mercy here may be Understood, not *in the* Operation of Faith in the Elect, and Operation of the Spirit of God, whereby they are converted *Irresistibly*. But he Collates those things which are apt to Promote both the Secular and Spiritual Good of Men, on such Persons, and upon such Considerations, as seem good to Him, yet so as not to be wanting to *any* in such things as are *necessary* to their Salvation, and might cause the Gospel to be Preached to the *Gentiles, &c.* whom he will he Hardeneth,] but as *St. August. lib. Octoginta trium Quest. q. 68.* he Hardeneth not by Infusing Wickedness into the Hearts of Men, but by leaving them to themselves, or permitting them to Satan.

Obj. v. 19. The *Jews* were ready to object, if he is not Merciful to all alike, but will Harden or Deliver some to be *Harden*
dened,

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dened, why doth he complain
of their obstinacy, for who resisteth his
will Harden?

Ans. The Apostle rejecteth
Indignation, he Wills not ab-
out just Reason, whether ke-
no; on the contrary, the Ob-
not want good Colour against ad-
probation, neither would the Cav-
validated by the following Allu-
Argument may Run thus, if the
not be Accused for making a Vessel to
honour out of the same Lump, where
there is no Repugnancy, or Incongruous
Nature or Qualification for greater Digni-
ty, how much less can it Argue Injustice
in God, if he with-hold his Grace from
Men, Contumaciously Thwarting and Op-
posing the Methods of it? The Compa-
rison is not to be thus applyed, viz. *As*
the Potter hath Power over the Clay, of the
same Lump, to make one Vessel to Honour, and
another to Dishonour, so God Creates some
Predestinated by his Absolute Decree to Sal-
vation, and Creates others, by his Absolute
Decree Rejected to Damnation. For this is
inconsistent with the Context, for it is not
there

that God *fitteth* Vessels of Wrath, with Long-suffering, he *indureth* them *fitted* to Destruction. He *finds* them Vessels of Wrath, but *finds* them *Rom. 2. 4. In him are Riches of Long-sufferance, Long-suffering, &c.*

22. v. of this 9th *Rom.* speaks the thing: What if God, willing to shew his Wrath, and make his Power known, *indured* with much Long-suffering, Vessels of Wrath *fitted* to Destruction? The Apostle intimates, that God, with much Patience had endured the *obedience* of ungodly *Jews*, might have *grieved* them, having by their *obedience* Rejection of the Gospel made them Vessels of Wrath, worthy to be cast into the Pit of Everlasting Destruction. And it is Manifest, that an absolute Degree of Reprobation, is not here asserted, but only such as pre-supposeth Perseverance in Sin, and Contempt of Divine Long-sufferance; for there would have been no need of God's Patience towards those whom he had *Created to Damnation*, or those whom he had *Reprobated* only.

Neither

54 *Grace Manifested in*

Neither can Persons, ablo
to Life, be understood here
Mercy, for it is said, *He had*
for Glory.

Moreover the Diversity of
is worthy Observation; the
God endured Vessels of W
Destruction, fitted by *them*
is their Destruction; but Vessels of
God is said to have *prepared* to Gl
him was the Rise of their Salvat

N. B. In Page 22. Line 18, the Rea
Mortals, to read *Morals*.

F I N I S
